

THE NEW SONG AND THE OLD STORY

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A SERMON

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*“O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.
Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.”
Psalm 96:1-3*

THERE are mighty passions of the human soul which seek vent, and can get no relief until they find it in expression. Grief, acute, but silent, has often destroyed the mind, because it has not been able to weep itself away in tears. The glow of passion, fond of enterprise and full of enthusiasm, has often seemed to rend the very fabric of manhood when unable either to attain its end or to utter its strong desires. So it is in true religion. It not only lays hold upon our intellectual nature with appeals to our judgment and our understanding, but at the same time, it engages our affections, brings our passions into play, and fires them with a holy zeal, producing a mighty furor, so that, when this spell is on a man, and the Spirit of God thoroughly possesses him, he must express his vehement emotions.

Some professors of religion are ingenious enough to conceal whatever grace they possess. Little enough they have, I warrant you, or it would soon be discovered. Have you never seen the brooks that were wont to come down the hillsides, filled up with stones through the greater part of the summer? You wonder whether there is any streamlet there at all. You may go and search among the rounded stones and scarcely find a trace of water.

How different after the snows have melted, or the mists upon the mountain's brows have turned to showers! Then the water comes rushing down like a mighty torrent, nor is there any question about its being a genuine stream. It shows itself as it rolls the great stones along, perhaps breaking down the banks and overflowing the country.

And so there is a religion—a poor, miserable, ordinary Christianity—which is not worth the name it bears, that can hide itself, but vital godliness must assert itself. It must speak plainly, it must act vigorously, it must appear conspicuously. The cross reveals the hearts of men, it unveils their true character.

Till the cross was set up, Joseph of Arimathaea was scarcely known to be a disciple, and Nicodemus continued to do habitually what he once did literally—resort to Jesus by night. Openly he remained in the Sanhedrim, though secretly he was a profound admirer of the great Redeemer. But when the cross was lifted up, Joseph went boldly in, with senatorial authority, and obtained the body of Jesus for burial, and Nicodemus came out with well-timed liberality to provide his hundred pounds of spices, and his fair white linen. Thus the cross reveals the thoughts of many hearts.

If you have real grace and true love to Jesus in your soul, you will want some way of expressing yourselves. Our purpose therefore now is to suggest to you two modes of expressing your consecration to God, and your devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ.

These two methods are *to sing about* and *to talk about* the good things the Lord has done for you, and the great things He has made known to you. Let sacred song take the lead, “O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. Sing unto the LORD, bless his name.” Then let gracious discourse follow, be it in public sermons or in private conversations, “Shew forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.”

I. We begin with THE VOICE OF MELODY.

All you, who love the Lord, give vent to your heart's emotion by holy song, and *take care that it be sung to the Lord alone*. What a noble instrument the human voice is! What a compass it has! Its low, soft whispers, how they can hold us spellbound, its full volume, as it peals forth like thunder, how it can startle and produce dismay! What profanity, then, to use such an instrument in the service of sin! Is not our tongue the glory of our frame?

Had I no conscientious objection to instrumental music in worship, I should still, I think, be compelled to admit that all the instruments that were ever devised by men, however sweetly attuned, are harsh and grating compared with the unparalleled sweetness of the human voice. When it is naturally melodious and skillfully trained, (and every true worshipper should be zealous to dedicate his richest talent and his highest acquirement to this sacred service), there can be no music under heaven that can equal the combination of voices which belong to men, women, and children whose hearts really love the Savior.

So sweet, so enchanting is the melody of song, that surely, its best efforts should not be put forth to celebrate martial victories or national jubilations, much less should it lend its potent charm to aught that is trivial or lascivious. By sacred right, its highest beauties should be consecrated to JEHOVAH. If you can sing, sing the songs of Zion. If God has gifted you with a sweet, liquid voice, be sure and use it to render homage unto Him who cried out for you upon the cross, "It is finished!" "Sing unto the LORD."

How much public singing, even in the house of God, is of no account! How little of it is singing unto the Lord! Does not the conscience of full many among you bear witness that you sing a hymn because others are singing it? You go right straight through with it by a kind of mechanical action. You cannot pretend that you are singing unto the Lord. He is not in all your thoughts.

Have you not been at places of worship where there is a trained choir evidently singing to the congregation? Tunes and tones are alike arranged for popular effect. There is an artistic appeal to human passions. Harmony is attended to, homage is neglected. That is not what God approves of.

I recollect a criticism upon a certain minister's prayers. It was reported, in the newspaper, that he uttered the finest prayer that had ever been offered to a Boston audience! I am afraid there is a good deal of vocal and instrumental music of the same species. It may be the finest praise ever offered to a congregation, but surely, that is not what we come together for.

If you need the sensual gratification of music's melting, mystic lay, let me commend to you the concert room, there you will get the enchanting ravishment, but when you come to the house of God, let it be to "sing unto the LORD." As you stand up to sing, there should be a fixed intent of the soul, a positive volition of the mind, an absolute determination of the heart that all the flame which kindles in your breast, and all the melody that breaks from your tongue, and all the sacred swell of grateful song shall be unto the Lord, and unto the Lord alone.

And if you would sing unto the Lord, let me recommend you to *flavor your mouth with the Gospel doctrines which savor most of grace unmerited and free*. Any other form of theology would tempt us more or less to chant the praise of men. Gratitude has full play when we come to know that salvation is of the Lord alone, and that mercy is divinely free.

He, who has once heard the echo of that awful thunder, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," will learn to rejoice with trembling, to sing with deep feeling, and to adore, with lowliest reverence, the great Supreme, to whom might and majesty belong, and from whom grace and goodness flow. Human counsels and conceits sink into insignificance, for thoughts of lovingkindness and deeds of renown belong unto the Lord alone.

Kindly glance your eye down the psalm from which our text is taken, and note how the exhortation to sing is given three times. I draw no absolute inference from this peculiar construction, but to say the least, it is remarkable that the number three is so continually employed.

Further down in the same psalm it is written, "Give unto the LORD," "Give unto the LORD," "Give unto the LORD," three times. Is there not here some kind of allusion to the wondrous doctrine of the

Trinity? At any rate, I make bold to use the threefold cord to express the homage with which it behooves us to adore the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

As for Unitarianism, it is a religion of units, and I suppose it always will be. There is no danger of its ever spreading very widely. It is cold as a moonlight night, though scarcely as clear. It has not enough of power in it to fire men's hearts to laud and magnify the Lord. It produces now and then a hymn, but it cannot kindle the passions of men to sing it with fervor and devout enthusiasm. Certainly, it cannot gather a crowd of grateful people, who will make a joyful noise unto the Lord, and with all their heart and voice shout the chorus of gratitude.

O beloved, I beseech you to let your souls have vent in praise! Sing, often, such a verse as this—

*“Bless'd be the Father, and His love,
To whose celestial source we owe
Rivers of endless joy above,
And rills of comfort here below.”*

Praise the God of glory, who loved you before the foundation of the world. Praise the God of grace, who called you when you sought Him not. Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has begotten us again unto a lively hope—our heavenly Father, who provides for us, educates us, instructs us, leads and guides us, and will bring us, by and by, to the many mansions in His own house.

Sing you also unto the Son. Never fail to adore the Son of God, who left the royalties of heaven to bear the indignities of earth. Adore the Lamb slain. Kneel at the cross-foot, and praise each wound, and magnify the Immortal who became mortal for our sakes.

*“Glory to Thee, great Son of God!
From whose dear wounded body rolls
A precious stream of vital blood,
Pardon and life for dying souls.”*

And then, sing you to the Holy Spirit. Let us never fail in praising Him, I am afraid we often do. We forget Him too much in our sermons, our prayers and our hymns, or we mention Him, perhaps, as a matter of course, with formal expressions rather than with feelings of the most intense fervor. Oh, how our hearts are bound reverently to worship the divine Indweller who, according to His abundant mercy, has made our bodies to be His temple wherein He deigns to dwell!

*“We give Thee, sacred Spirit, praise,
Who in our hearts of sin and woe
Makes living springs of grace arise,
And into boundless glory flow.”*

Praise you, with your songs, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost—the Triune God of Israel. Have you understood this? To JEHOVAH let your song be addressed. Thrice be His holy name repeated

Then, be careful of the psalmist's instructions, let the song that you sing be a new song. “O sing unto the LORD *a new song!*” Not the song of your old legal bondage, which you used to sing so tremblingly, with the dread of a slave, a new and nobler song becomes you who are the Lord's children, His sons and daughters, “O sing unto the LORD *a new song!*”

To some of you the song of redemption is quite new. Once, you sang the songs of Bacchus or of Venus, or else you hummed over some light air, without meaning or motive, unless to while away your time, and drive away all serious thoughts. O you, who used so readily to sing the songs of Babylon, sing now the songs of Zion quite as freely and earnestly! “Sing unto the LORD *a new song.*”

By a “new” song, is meant the best song. It is put for that which is most elegant, most exquisite, and best composed. Pindar says, “Give me old wine, but give me a new song.” So may we say, “Give us the old wines of the kingdom of God, but let us sing unto the LORD a new song,” the best that we can find—no borrowed air, no hackneyed lyric, and let our spirits sing unto the Lord that which wells up fresh out of the quickened heart.

A new song—always new, keep up the freshness of your praise. Do not drivel down into dull routine. The drowsy old clerks in the dreary old churches used always to say, “Let us sing to the praise and glory of God such and such a psalm,” till I should think the poor old Tate and Brady version was pretty well used up. We have new mercies to celebrate, therefore we must have new songs.

*“Blest be his love who now hath set
New time upon the score.”*

With “new time upon the score,” let there be new notes for Him who renews the face of nature. And have we not, dear brethren and sisters, new graces? Then let us sing with our new faith, our new love and our new hope.

Some of you have very lately been made new creatures in Christ Jesus, sing ye unto the LORD a new song. Surely He has done great things for you, whereof you are glad. Others of you have been converted for years, yet if your inward man is renewed day by day, your praises shall be always new. Luther used to say that the wounds of Christ seemed to him to bleed today as if they had never bled before, for he found such freshness in his Master.

You pluck a flower, and it soon loses its scent, and begins to wither, but our sweet Lord Jesus has a savor about His name that never departs. We take His name to lie like a bundle of camphire all night betwixt our breasts, and in the morning it smells as sweet as when we laid down to sleep, and when we come to die, that Lily of the valleys will drop with the same profusion as it did when, with our youthful hands, we first plucked it, and came to Jesus and gave Him all our trust. “Sing unto the LORD a new song.” Let the freshness of your joy and the fullness of your thanks be perennial as the days of heaven.

This song, according to our text, *is designed to be universal*, “Sing unto the LORD all the earth.” Let sires and sons mingle in its strains. Let not the aged among you say, “Our voices are cracked,” but sing to the Lord with all the voice you have, and all the compass you can. And you young people, give the Lord the highest notes you are able to reach. Still sing unto the Lord, you that are rich, sing unto the Lord who has saved you, for it is not many of your sort that He saves.

*“Gold and the Gospel seem to ill agree:
Religion always sides with poverty,”—*

said John Bunyan, and he spoke the truth. Sing unto the Lord, you poor ones whom the Lord has favored, for still does it happen that “the poor have the gospel preached unto them.” Sing unto Him, you who are learned in many matters. Let your talents make your song more full of understanding. And you who are unlearned, if you cannot put so much of understanding into the song, put more of the spirit, and sing with all the more heartiness.

All the earth should sing. There is not one of us but has cause for song, and certainly not one saint but ought specially to praise the name of the Lord. You remember that passage in the hundred and seventh psalm (it is worth noticing), where the psalmist says, “Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy,” as if they, above all others, ought to say, “O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever!”

In addition to its being a new song, and a universal one, it is to be *a very inspiration of gratitude*, “Sing unto the LORD: *bless his name*.” How apt you are, in speaking of anyone who has been kind to you, to say, “God bless him!” The expression comes right up from your heart. And although you cannot invoke any blessing on God, you can desire for His name every blessing and every tribute of homage.

You can desire for His cause that it may be established, and may be triumphant. You may desire for His people that they may be helped, made holy, and guided to their eternal rest. You may desire for mankind that they may hallow God's holy name, and all because you feel you owe so much to the Lord that you cannot help praising, and cannot help wishing that your praise should be fruitful on earth and acceptable in heaven.

In two ways, I think, it becomes us to sing God's praises. We ought to *sing with the voice*. I do not consider we sing enough to God. The poet speaks of "angel harp and human voice." If the angel harp be more skillful, surely the human voice is more grateful. For my part, I like to hear sacred songs in all sorts of places. The maidservant can sing at her work and the carter as he drives his team. The occupations are few which could not be enlivened by repeating the words, and running over the tune of a hymn. If it were only in a faint whisper, the habit might be cultivated.

You might expose yourselves, it is true, to a taunt, and be upbraided as "a psalm-singing Methodist," but that would not do you any hurt, better that than make a ribald jest or utter an impious blasphemy. Those who lend their tongues to such vile uses have something to be ashamed of. Lovers of pleasure sing their songs, and poor trash, for the most part, they are. If the snatches we catch in the streets are the echoes of the saloon and the music hall, little credit is due to those who cater for public amusement. Lacking alike in sense and sentiment, they betray the degeneracy of the times, and the depravity of popular taste.

There is a literature of song in which peasants may rejoice, of which patriots may be proud, and to which poets may turn with envious eyes. Why wed your pretty tunes to paltry words? The higher the art, the more the pity to debase it.

If you cull over our hymn books for samples of bad poetry, loose rhyme, and puerile thoughts, that reviewers like to revile, and libertines like to laugh at, we can only say, "Well, we cannot always vindicate the culture of those whose sincerity we hold in the highest esteem, but we will dare to confront you on equal terms—the sanctuary *versus* the saloon—our vocalists against your vocalists, from the sacred oratorios of Handel to the choicest of your operas—from the cant of our revival hymns to the catch of your last sensational songs.

Yes, indeed, the people of God should sing more. Were we to try the exercise, we would find no small degree of pleasure in the practice. It would do us good to praise God more day by day. When we get together, two or three of us, we are in the habit of saying, "Let us pray." Might we not sometimes say, "Let us sing"? We have our regular prayer meetings, why do we not have praise meetings just as often?

*"Prayer and praise for sins forgiven
Make up on earth the bliss of heaven."*

We are like a bird that has only one wing. There is much prayer, but there is little praise. "Sing unto the LORD. Sing unto the LORD."

To *sing with the heart*, is the very essence of song.

*"In the heavenly Lamb, thrice happy I am
And my heart it doth leap at the sound of His name."*

Though the tongue may not be able to express the language of the soul, the heart is glad. Some persons seem never to sing with their heart. Their lips move, but their heart does not beat. In their common daily life, they move about as if they had been born on a dark winter's night, and carried the cold chill into all their concerns. The lamentation they constantly utter is this, "All these things are against me." Their experience is comprised in this sentence, "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

They never get into the harbor. "In me ye shall have peace," is a secret they have never realized. They are fond of calling this world a howling wilderness, and they are utterly oblivious of its orchards and vineyards. Were God to put them in the garden of Eden, they would not take any notice of the fruit

or the flowers. They would go straight away to the serpent, and begin saying, “Ah, there’s a snake here!” Their harp is hung on the willows, they never can sing, for their heart is unstrung.

Well, dear friends, a Christian ought to be like a horse that has bells on his head, so that he cannot go anywhere without ringing them and making music. His whole life should be a psalm, every step should be in harmony, every thought should constitute a note, every word he utters should be a component part of the joyful strain. It is a blessed thing to see a Christian going about his business like the high priest of old who, wherever he went made music with the golden bells.

Oh, to have a cheerful spirit—not the levity of the thoughtless, nor the gaiety of the foolish, nor even the mirth of the healthy—there is a cheerful spirit which is the gift of grace, that can and does rejoice evermore. Then, when troubles come we bear them cheerfully, let fortune smile, we receive it with equanimity, or let losses befall us, we endure them with resignation, being willing, so long as God is glorified, to accept anything at His hands. These are the people to recommend Christianity. Their cheerful conversation attracts others to Christ.

As for those people who are morose or morbid, sullen or severe, harsh in their judgment of their fellow men, or rebellious against the will of God—people of a covetous disposition, a peevish temper, and a quarrelsome character—unto them it is of no use to say, “O sing unto the LORD,” for they will never do it. They have not any bells in the tower of their heart, what chimes can they ring? Their harps have lost their strings, how can they magnify the Most High? But genuine piety finds expression in jubilant song, this is the initiative, though it is far from exhausting its resources.

II. Now, in the second place, let me stir you up, especially you who are members of this church, to such DAILY CONVERSATION and such HABITUAL DISCOURSE as shall be fitted to spread the Gospel which you love.

Our text admonishes you to “show forth his salvation.” You believe in the salvation of God—a salvation all of grace from first to last. You have seen it, you have received it, you have experienced it. Well now, show it forth. Explain it to others, and with the explanation let there be an illustration, exemplify it by your lives. God has shone upon you with the light of His countenance, that you may reflect His brightness, and irradiate others.

Every Christian here is like the moon, which shines with borrowed light. But the sun lends not its bright rays to be hoarded up. It is that they may scatter beams of brightness over this world of night. Take care then, that you are faithful to your trust. Show forth His salvation. God knows that I try to do so from the pulpit, I wish that you would all try and do so from the pews. Are you lacking in opportunities? I think not. Before and after service, especially to strangers and such as may have been induced to come and hear the Gospel, speak a word in season, thoughtfully, prayerfully, softly, talk with them.

Show forth this salvation too, in your own houses, or on your visits, or wherever your lot may happen, in God’s providence, to be cast. It is wonderful how God blesses little efforts, very little efforts. I have sometimes—I am sorry to say not as often as I ought—scattered seed by the wayside.

Only a few nights ago, I had been driven by a cabman, and after I had alighted and given him the fare, he took a little Testament out of his pocket and said, “It is about fifteen years ago since you gave me that, and said a word to me about my soul, and it has stuck by me, and I have not let a day pass since without reading it.” I felt glad. I know that if Christian people would try and show forth God’s salvation, they would often be surprised to find how many hearts would gladly receive it.

Beloved, show forth this salvation from day to day. Let it not be merely on a Sunday. While you hold that day as specially sacred, let no other day be common or unclean. We are thankful for the kindly efforts put forth, in the Sunday school, and elsewhere, on our Sabbaths, but we want Christian activity to be put forth from day to day.

Let your zeal for the conversion of your fellow creatures be continuous. “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not your hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this

or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.” The result of the Sabbath work may, perhaps, not be seen by you, when the result of Monday’s work may very speedily appear.

“Shew forth his salvation from day to day.” This admonition is enforced in three clauses, so let us notice the second. “Declare his glory among the heathen.” It is the same thing in another form. When you are telling out the Gospel, point especially to the glory of it. Show them the justice of the great substitution, and the mercy of it. Show them the wisdom which devised the plan whereby, without a violation of the law, God could yet pardon rebellious sinners.

Impress upon those whom you talk with, that the Gospel you have to tell them of is no common place system of expediency, but it is really a glorious revelation of divinity. You know men are very much attracted by aught of glory and renown. They will even rush to the cannon’s mouth for so-called glory.

Now, be sure, when you are talking to others about the salvation you have received at the hands of your dear Lord and Master, that you tell them about the glory thereof—what a glory it brings to Christ, and to what a glory it will bring every sinner by and by. Tell them of the glory of being pardoned, the glory of being accepted, the glory of being justified, the glory of being sanctified. Is it not all “according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus”?

I think you might relate some scenes from the deathbeds of the saints you have known, on which rays of glory have fallen, but I am sure you might anticipate the glory, which words cannot picture, or imagination realize, in the second advent of the Lord Jesus, the resurrection of the just, and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom. Dwell upon these things. Declare His glory.

And do not be ashamed to do this in the presence of people of a disreputable character, though their ignorance and degradation be ever so palpable, “Declare his glory among the *heathen*.” “I am going on a mission to the heathen,” said a minister once to his people. Mistaking his meaning, they went home deploring the loss of their pastor. On the following Sunday, when they found him in the pulpit, they discovered that he had not been out of the city all week, and when they wanted to know what parts he had visited, and what people he had seen, he reminded them that he had heathens at home, and they were to be found even in his own congregation.

Ah, and there may be some heathens here! At any rate, there are plenty of heathens in this great city of London. I have no doubt there are parts of this metropolis in which hundreds and even thousands of people reside who are as ignorant of the plan of salvation as the inhabitants of Coomassie. They know nothing of Jesus, even though the light is so bright around them. “Declare his glory among the heathen,” ye lovers of Christ. Penetrate into the dark places, break up fresh ground, Christian men and women.

I am persuaded and this is a matter I have often spoken of, that many of you who sit and hear sermons on the Sunday, ought rather to turn out, and preach the Gospel. While we are glad to see you occupying pews, it will be a greater joy to miss you from your wonted seats, if we only know that you are declaring God’s glory among the heathen.

I am not sure that we are all of us right to be living cooped up in this little island of ours. There are, in England, enough disciples of Jesus to bear the Gospel to the uttermost ends of the earth, but perhaps there is not one Christian in five or ten thousand who ever deliberately thinks about going to the heathen to make known to them the way of salvation, and to declare the glory of the Lord among those who have never heard His name.

Pray that there may yet come a wonderful wave of God’s Spirit over our churches, which shall bear upon its crest hundreds of ardent spirits resolved to carry the tidings of redemption to the jungle and the fever swamp, to the high latitudes and the southern islands. Oh, that the love of Christ may constrain them!

Know you not that Christ has determined to save men by the preaching of the Gospel? Has He not charged His disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature? How poorly has His church carried out this commission! If you love Christ, here is the opportunity for you to show your love, go and declare His glory among the heathen.

A third expression is used here. “Declare his wonders among all people.” Our Gospel is a Gospel of wonders. It deals with wonderful sin in a wonderful way. It presents to us a wonderful Savior, and tells us of His wonderful complex person. It points us to His wonderful atonement and it takes the blackest sinner, and makes him wonderfully clean. It makes him a new creature, and works a wonderful change in him. It conducts him to wonders of happiness, and wonders of strength, and yet onward to greater wonders of light and life, for it opens up to him the wonders of the covenant. It gives him wonderful provisions, wonderful deliverances, and leads him right up, by the power of Him who is called Wonderful, to the gates of that Wonderland where we shall forever—

*“Sing, with rapture and surprise,
His lovingkindness in the skies.”*

Surely, dear Christian friends, we ought to talk about the wonders of the Lord our God, and especially should we dwell upon those wonders which we have ourselves seen. Of every Christian man, it might be said that he is a wonder. Will you think a minute, Christian, of the wonder that God has made of you, and the wonders that He has done for you? “That ever I should be,” is a wonder—will you not say that? and then, “That ever I should be saved, is a wonder of wonders.” That you should have been kept till now, that you should not have been allowed to go back, that you should have been preserved under so many troubles, that your prayers should have been heard so continuously, that, notwithstanding your ill manners, the love of Christ should still have remained the same—oh, but I cannot recite the tale of marvels, it is a long series of wonders!

The Christian man’s life, if the worldling could understand it, would seem to him like a romance. The wonders of grace far exceed the wonders of nature, and of all the miracles God Himself has ever wrought, there are no miracles so matchless in wonder as the miracles of grace in the heart of man.

Beloved, declare these miracles, these wonders, tell them to others. Men like to hear a tale of wonder, they will gather round the fire, at eventide, when the logs are burning, and delightedly listen to a story of wonder. When you go home, young man, for your next holiday, if God has converted you, tell what great things the Lord has done for you. And when you go home, Mary, and see your mother, if the Lord has met with you, tell her what the Lord has done for you.

“Declare his wonders among all people.” Do not be afraid of speaking about the Gospel to anybody or in any company. Whoever they may be, whether they be rich or poor, high or low, if you get an opportunity of declaring the wonders of God’s grace, do not let the Gospel be unknown for want of a tongue to tell it.

So, you see, I have put before you these two outlets for your love—first, sacred song and secondly, gracious discourse. Be sure to use them both and if any bid you hold your peace, shall I tell you the answer? Use the same answer which your Master did to the Pharisees when they complained of the shouts of the little children—“If these should hold their tongues, the very stones would cry out.” Ordinary Christians may be quiet because God has done nothing very wonderful for them. They go through the world in a very ordinary kind of way. Their religion is skin-deep and no more.

But those who know that they deserved the deepest hell, and who have been saved by a mighty effort of infinite mercy must tell what God has done for them. They must come out from the world and be separate. They must be decided, zealous, and even enthusiastic. Necessity is laid upon them to be earnest and intense in all they do and in all they say. They cannot help it, for the love of Jesus will fire their souls with a passion that cannot be quenched. “We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not live henceforth unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” God help you, beloved, thus to live!

As for those of you who have never found the Savior, you cannot tell of His excellence or publish His worth, but I do trust that you will not forget that Jesus is to be found by those who seek Him, for whosoever believeth on Him shall be saved. Take Him at His word. Rely on His promise. Trust Him.

Commit your soul into His keeping. Cast yourself unfeignedly and unreservedly on His mercy. He will not spurn you, but He will receive you graciously, and you shall yet praise Him, and He will be the health of your countenance and your God.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—885, 102 (PART 2), 135 (VERSION 2)

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

DANIEL 9:14-23

Verses 14-21. *Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.*

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.

That is the time when prayer is always heard, when the lamb is offered, and his blood is sprinkled, and blessed be God, the sacrifice in which we trust has been offered once for all. The Christ, who has gone into heaven as a lamb that had been slain, has, by His one offering, made perpetual oblation unto the Most High on our behalf. So pray when we will, we may expect an answer. See how quick it was in Daniel's case, “Whiles I was speaking in prayer,” the angel Gabriel, in the form of a man, appeared unto him, and brought him the answer to his petition.

22-23. *And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandant came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.*

And then he told him of the Messiah who was coming, of all that would happen to Him, of the week of respite, and then of the final consummation when God would permit the foreign prince to come and destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and to pour upon them the desolations which He had determined to inflict upon them.

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